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Wellness Online
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April is Alcohol Awareness Month

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Alcohol and Substance Abuse: Recognizing the Symptoms

Is it time to get help? Here are some ways to tell whether you have a substance abuse problem.

Substance abuse is something nobody likes to talk about. But with millions of Americans wrestling with some form of addiction, there is a need to understand it. After all, substance abuse affects more than just the person addicted. It affects everyone around them, too.



Many people are substance abusers without even knowing it. But there are ways to tell when your dependence on alcohol or another substance is out of control. If you or a loved one has any of these classic symptoms, it's time to see a doctor or addiction counselor.

A sense of dependency and inability to quit

Substance abusers often say they need a "pick-me-up" or something to "take the edge off". This is another way of saying they've

become dependent. Once you become dependent, you feel you can't get by without a drug or without alcohol. You may:

- Use it in the morning to get yourself going
- Use it at night to fall asleep
- Need it throughout the day to steady your nerves
- Rely on it to enhance your mood

You'd like to stop but just can't seem to do it. You swear to yourself this is the last time, but then it never is. Your efforts to quit end in failure. This is the case even when your substance abuse makes you unhappy or gets you into trouble. More than likely, a chemical addiction is to blame. Stop beating yourself up and get some help.

Feelings of guilt or shame, risky behavior and inability to function

Substance abusers are often embarrassed by their behavior. You may feel guilty and try to conceal it. You also might:

- Lie to others about your drinking or drug use
- Become angry when someone brings it up
- Steal away to use drugs or alcohol in secret

Substance abuse is risky by itself. But it sometimes leads people to do things they otherwise wouldn't. For instance, you may find yourself:

- Spending more than you can afford on drugs or alcohol
- Consuming them in greater amounts
- Driving while intoxicated
- Stealing to support your habit
- Committing other kinds of crime

Substance abuse hinders success in other ways too. A person suffering from addiction often:

- Gets into trouble at work
- Falls behind in school
- Has scrapes with the law
- Has more money problems
- Alienates friends and loved ones
- Has marital or relationship problems
- Abandons other interests and activities

Asking for help

Help is readily available. To start, you have to let someone know you need help. Don't be ashamed to speak up, either for yourself or a loved one. If you think a problem is developing, tell your doctor right away. It may feel like a hard step right now. But in the long run, you'll be glad you took it.



Test Your IQ: Drug Use and Addiction

Even moderate use of alcohol, tobacco and illicit drugs can be harmful to your health.

Drug addiction and abuse is a serious problem in America. Some people believe addiction is all about willpower. However, much research has shown that addiction is a brain disease. Early experimentation with illicit drugs, nicotine and alcohol may be voluntary, but using or abusing these drugs can change the way our brains work. This, in turn, causes changes in our social behavior, judgment and relationships. Our actions can become centered on getting more of the drug we crave.

Drug abuse and addiction can affect heart and liver disease, lung disease, stroke, cancer, HIV/AIDS and hepatitis. Some of these physical effects occur over time. Some may occur with just a single use.

Let's test your drug IQ. See how many of these questions you can answer correctly.

1. Abuse of alcohol, nicotine and illegal substances costs Americans a lot of money. The yearly cost of their combined medical, economic, criminal and social impact is estimated at:

- a. \$500 million
- b. \$1 billion
- c. \$100 billion
- d. \$500 billion

Answer: d. The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) says half a trillion dollars is spent on these areas related to alcohol and drug abuse.

2. Every year, abuse of illicit drugs and alcohol contributes to the death of how many Americans?

- a. 50,000
- b. 100,000
- c. 200,000
- d. 250,000

Answer: b. Add to this an estimated 440,000 deaths linked to tobacco use to get the total tragic picture: more than half a million preventable deaths due to addiction and chemical abuse.

3. What do we mean by abuse of prescription drugs?

- a. Taking a prescription drug that is not prescribed for you
- b. Taking a prescription drug in a dosage other than what is prescribed
- c. Using a prescription drug for a reason other than how it was prescribed
- d. All of the above

Answer: d. Pain medications, anxiety medications and stimulants are among the most commonly abused prescription drugs.

4. Drug poisoning deaths are most common among adults under age 35. **True or False?**

Answer: False. Drug poisoning deaths are more common among those ages 45-54 than in other age groups.

5. What is the leading cause of death from injuries in America?

- a. Traffic accidents
- b. Suicides
- c. Poisoning

Answer: c. As of 2008, poisoning was the leading cause of injury death. Drugs caused nearly 9 out of 10 poisoning deaths.

Counting Calories in Alcoholic Beverages

If you're counting calories, think before taking that next drink. It could have more calories than your favorite dessert.

A cocktail before dinner or a glass or two of wine with the meal is so common that some

people don't even give it a second thought. But if you're trying to watch calories, here is something to think about before you take that next alcoholic drink.

This may be news to some, but alcohol has a lot of calories, often more than the dessert you turn down. In addition, having a drink or two before or with a meal may actually stimulate you to eat more and take in more calories. Researchers speculate that alcohol increases the pleasure of eating. While "under the influence," it's also more likely that you will lose your inhibitions and indulge in foods that are less nutritious.



Without a doubt, the calories in your alcoholic drink can affect your waistline just as the alcohol can affect your mental functioning and physical health. But you can enjoy small amounts of alcohol and still maintain or even lose weight. The key? Arm yourself with calorie facts and follow the tips below.

How many calories are you drinking?

Weight gain, loss or maintenance depends on how many calories you take in. Most people are completely unaware of how many calories are in certain drinks. It's easy to go overboard without realizing it.

The calorie amounts listed here are for an *average size drink*. Many drinks may have even more, depending on how big the tumbler, glass or beer mug is.

Beer (regular)	12 oz.	150
Beer (light)	12 oz.	100
Daiquiri	10 oz.	300
Eggnog	8 oz.	350
Kahlua	1.5 oz.	140
Long Island Iced Tea	10 oz.	580
Margarita	8 oz.	420
Piña Colada	10 oz.	550
Screwdriver	8 oz.	190
Shot of liquor (gin, rum, vodka, whiskey)	1.5 oz.	100
Whiskey Sour	8 oz.	375
White Russian	8 oz.	500
Wine (red or white)	6 oz.	120

In the end, a smart strategy includes a plan for both eating *and* drinking. With that in mind, it may be possible to include some alcohol in your meal plan without piling on the pounds.

Source4Women Online Seminar: Wellness at Work

Audrey Thomas, CSP, "Organized Audrey"

April 12, 2016, 12:30 p.m. ET, 11:30 a.m. CT, 10:30 a.m. MT, 9:30 a.m. PT



Everyone knows the importance of practicing healthy habits. We may live longer and enjoy a more active lifestyle and are able to do more physically. Wellness needs to be practiced at work too, but there's so much going on between meetings, projects and all of those emails. This webinar will explore 10 healthy habits, that when practiced regularly, may contribute to having less stress and increased productivity at work and better balance once you get home. Who doesn't want to feel better at work and at home?

To register for an upcoming Source4Women seminar, visit www.source4women.com and click on "Online Seminars & Events." All seminars are recorded and archived for viewing after the live seminar date.



We Dare You This April!

April is here and we have new dares! This month, We Dare You to:

1. Answer one of our quiz questions about reducing unexpected out-of-pocket costs
2. Play our concentration game by matching health insurance cost terms and their definitions
3. Watch our "Avoiding Cost Surprises" video and share your opinion

Complete one or more of the dares for a chance to win a \$400 Visa gift card!
Click [here](#) to get started! #WeDareYou

Health Tip:

Learn how employee assistance programs can help you.

Some companies have special services to help their workers cope with situations that may make it difficult to focus on family or work. An employee assistance program is a service offered by a company to help workers deal with personal problems or problems related to work. EAPs can help with many issues, such as:

- Physical and mental health
- Family, marital and elder care
- Financial and legal issues
- Alcohol, drugs and other addictions
- Emotional health and stress



Contact your Human Resources or Benefits Department to find out more.

Monthly Recipe:

Grilled Pork Tenderloin with Maple Apple Sauce

Serves: 4

Ingredients:

1 pork tenderloin (12-16 ounces)
Cooking spray
1/4 cup maple syrup
1/4 cup apple cider vinegar
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
1/2 teaspoon ground sage
1 medium apple, peeled, cored and finely chopped



Preparation:

1. Preheat grill.
2. Place pork on grill rack coated with cooking spray. Grill 20 minutes or until a thermometer reads 155-160°, turning once. Let pork stand 10 minutes.
3. To prepare sauce, whisk maple syrup, vinegar, mustard, and sage in a medium saucepan, add apples. Heat sauce over medium heat until heated.
4. Cut pork crosswise into 1/2 inch thick slices and divide onto four plates. Pour maple apple sauce over meat and serve immediately.

Nutrition Facts:

Calories: 202
Total Fat: 5.5g
Saturated Fat: 1.5g
Cholesterol: 65mg
Sodium: 49mg
Total Carbohydrates: 17g
Dietary Fiber: 5g
Protein: 20g

Recipe Source: Kathleen Zelman, MPH, RD

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